

REMARKS

This is intended as a full and complete response to the Final Office Action dated January 8, 2008, having a shortened statutory period for response set to expire on April 8, 2008. Applicants submit this response to place the application in condition for allowance or in better form for appeal. Please reconsider the claims pending in the application for reasons discussed below.

Claims 9, 11-18 and 25 are pending in the application. Claims 9, 11-18 and 25 remain pending following entry of this response. Claims 9 and 25 have been amended only to correct antecedent basis errors. The amendments to claims 9 and 25 do not change the scope or content of the claims, and therefore do not raise new issues that would require further search or consideration. Applicants submit that the amendments do not introduce new matter.

Interview Summary

On April 7, 2008, a telephonic interview was held between John C. Garza, Applicant's representative, and Leon J. Harper, Examiner. The parties discussed the cited references including *Barger* and *Nolan*. Claim 9 was discussed. The parties also discussed proposed amendments to claim 9.

During the interview, Applicants argued that the proposed combination of *Barger* and *Nolan* fail to teach all the elements of the present claims. No agreement could be reached at the time of the interview.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 9, 11-18 and 25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Barger* et al., US 20040205545 (hereinafter *Barger*), in view of *Nolan* et al., US5253362 (hereinafter *Nolan*).

Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

The Examiner bears the initial burden of establishing a *prima facie* case of obviousness. See MPEP § 2142. To establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness three basic criteria must be met. First, there must be some suggestion or motivation, either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one ordinary skill in the art, to modify the reference or to combine the reference teachings. Second, there must be a reasonable expectation of success. Third, the prior art reference (or references when combined) must teach or suggest all the claim limitations. See MPEP § 2143.

The present rejection fails to establish at least the third criteria. More specifically, the combined references fail to teach an annotation browser that “is configured to display annotations and links to associated annotated data objects; and wherein selecting the links to the associated data objects causes an application used to manipulate the associated data objects to be invoked,” as recited in the claim 9. Claim 25 includes similar limitations. With regards to these limitations, the Examiner argues:

In this case the argued limitations of claims 9 and 25 only require that the annotation browser display 1. annotations and 2. links to associated annotated data objects, And while applicant points to specific embodiments in the specification the term data object is a term broader than any of the specific embodiments. Nolan discloses annotation links to forms or reports associated with a data cell (See Nolan column 2 lines 50-52).

Final Office Action, p.7. Applicants respectfully submit that the argued limitations of claims 9 and 25 require more than simply “1. annotations and 2. links to associated annotated data objects,” as asserted by the Examiner. Rather, the argued limitations of claims 9 and 25 require a browser displaying annotations along with links to associated

annotated data objects, where selecting a displayed link causes an application for manipulating the associated annotated data object to be invoked. Applicants respectfully submit that the cited passage of *Nolan*, and the proposed combination of *Barger* and *Nolan* generally, make no mention of invoking an application for manipulating a data object by selecting a link displayed with an annotation associated to the data object.

At best, *Nolan* discloses a display screen 100 for displaying annotations, which may be broadly interpreted as reading on the recited “browser displaying annotations” (see *Nolan*, Figures 7A-7B). As described in *Nolan*, such annotations may be associated with cells of a spreadsheet, such as cell 465 of form 450 (See *Nolan*, Col. 5, lines 35-40). However, *Nolan* does not describe the display screen 100 as including any sort of “links to associated annotated data objects,” as recited in claim 9. Further, *Nolan* does not disclose any link (or other manner) for invoking an application for manipulating data objects associated to the annotations. For example, *Nolan* does not describe the annotations included in the display screen 100 as having any links that invoke the spreadsheet application that is used to manipulate the form 450. Furthermore, *Nolan* does not disclose separate applications for displaying annotations and for manipulating the annotated data objects, as required by the present claims. In fact, Figure 1 of *Nolan* only includes a single user application named “Forms Manager 12.”

Therefore, claims 9 and 25 and their dependents are believed to be allowable, and withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

Having addressed all issues set out in the office action, Applicants respectfully submit that the claims are in condition for allowance and respectfully request that the claims be allowed.

If the Examiner believes any issues remain that prevent this application from going to issue, the Examiner is strongly encouraged to contact Gero McClellan, attorney of record, at (336) 643-3065, to discuss strategies for moving prosecution forward toward allowance.

Respectfully submitted, and
S-signed pursuant to 37 CFR 1.4,

/Gero G. McClellan, Reg. No. 44,227/

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